

Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02 SAB-01 /085 W

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R 200819Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4329

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 0304

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR PBOR MO SS

SUBJ: USFP EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS

1. FROM JANUARY 10-12, LEFTIST SOCIALIST UNION OF POPULAR FORCES (FORMED LATE LAST YEAR AFTER TWO-YEAR DE FACTO SPLIT WITH UNFP), HELD EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS ATTENDED BY SOME 600 - 700 OF FAITHFUL. PARTICIPANTS WERE BROKEN DOWN BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES (WORKERS, FARMERS, INTELLECTUALS, STUDENTS, ETC) AND CAME FROM EVERY PROVINCE EXCEPT AL HOCEIMA WHERE PARTY HAS NOT BEEN PERMITTED OPERATE SINCE 1958 REBELLION. ONLY TUNISIA AND IRAQ SENT SPECIAL EMISSARIES TO CONGRESS, BUT MESSAGES FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY OF EASTERN EUROPE, WERE NUMEROUS. ATTENDANCE WAS PROBABLY SLIGHTLY LESS THAN AT UNFP CONGRESS IN DECEMBER AND FAR LOWER THAN REPORTED 3,500 WHO TURNED OUT FOR ISTIQLAL CONGRESS IN FALL. AMBASSADOR WAS AMONG HALF DOZEN OR SO AMBASSADORS, MOSTLY ARAB AND EAST EUROPEAN, TO ATTEND OPENING SESSION. ISTIQLAL, COMMUNIST AND RIGHTIST MPCD LEADERS ALSO PRESENT.

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2. INTERNAL POLITICS: WHILE PARTY'S IDEOLOGICAL REPORT, READ BY

NUMBER THREE MAN OMAR BENJELLOUN, EMPHASIZED AT EXCRUCIATING LENGTH NEED FOR BUILDING ISLAMIC SOCIALISM IN MOROCCO, MODERATE, PRAGMATIC OPENING AND CLOSING SPEECHES BY LEADER BOUABID SET TONE OF CONGRESS. BOUABID CALLED FOR UNITY OF ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY IN BUILDING TRUE DEMOCRACY, FOR NATIONALIZATION OF MANY SECTORS OF ECONOMY, AND FOR GENERAL AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS. BOUABID AND OTHERS STRESSED HEAVY REPRESSION WHICH PARTY HAD SUFFERED OVER PAST DECADE, AND A HIGHLIGHT OF CONGRESS WAS PLAYING OF TAPE RECORDED MESSAGE FROM EXILED USFP LEADER ABDERRAHMAN YOUSSEFI, WHO ASKED PERMISSION TO RESIGN ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS AND BE CONSIDERED SIMPLE MILITANT. BOUABID ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT CONGRESS HAD NOT BEEN CALLED TO ENDORSE CALL FOR ELECTIONS, THAT CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION REMAINED UNCHANGED, AND THAT PARTY HAD HEARD NOTHING SPECIFIC FROM PALACE ON ELECTIONS. NEVERTHELESS, HE INDICATED CONTINUED USFP SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL FRONT WITH ISTIQLAL AND MADE IT CLEAR THAT PARTY WOULD CONSIDER ANY ELECTION PROPOSAL SERIOUSLY.

3. FOREIGN AFFAIRS: PARTY TOOK PREDICTABLE, LEFTIST POSITIONS, AND SUPPORTED "LIBERATION" MOVEMENTS WORLDWIDE. PALESTINIAN CAUSE GIVEN EXPECTED MAJOR ATTENTION. PLO REP IN MOROCCO, ABU MARWAN, ADDRESSED CONGRESS AND COLLECTION FOR PALESTINIANS WAS TAKEN DURING HIS ADDRESS. ON SAHARA, USFP HAILED SUCCESS OF MOROCCAN DIPLOMACY IN BRINGING MATTER TO ICJ (PARTY LEADERS HAVE BEEN SAYING IN CONVERSATION THAT BOUABID PROPOSED ICJ IDEA TO KING AS MEANS OF BREAKING SUMMER'S IMPASSE) AND HAD SPECIAL PRAISE FOR CONSTRUCTIVE MAURITANIAN STAND.

4. APPARATUS: PARTY ELECTED 7-MAN POLITICAL BUREAU AND BOUABID CHOSEN FIRST SECRETARY. 35-MEMBER ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION AND 70-MEMBER CENTRAL COMMITTEE ALSO ELECTED AS WELL AS SMALL ARBITRATION AND CONTROL COMMITTEES.

5 COMMENT: CONGRESS WAS FINE HOUR FOR BOUABID AND ITS WORK REFLECTED HIS STYLE AND MODERATE PHILOSOPHY. WITH PASSING OF ALLAL EL FASSI, BOUABID HAS BECOME MOST PROMINENT OPPOSITION FIGURE, AND IT APPEARS THAT HE IS CONSIDERED AS SUCH BY PALACE. HIS MODERATE STANCE MAY BE AIMED AT ONCE AT INSPIRING KING'S CONFIDENCE AND AT ATTRACTING SUPPORT BEYOND DEPLETED RANKS OF USFP.

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6. AT SAME TIME, PARTY HAS SUFFERED MUCH AT HANDS OF REGIME, AND THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT SOME OF ITS NUMBER WOULD HAVE LIKED TO TAKE MORE RADICAL LINE. PARTY'S NUMBER TWO AND THREE MEN, MOHAMED EL YAZGHI AND OMAR BENJELLOUN, HAVE SPENT MOST OF PAST TWO YEARS, AND CONSIDERABLE PERCENTAGE OF PRECEDING DECADE, IN JAIL AND WERE NEARLY KILLED IN 1973 BY PACKAGE BOMBS WIDELY BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN PLANTED BY REGIME.

10 OF 35 ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION MEMBERS HAVE ALSO BEEN JAILED IN RECENT YEARS ON POLITICAL CHARGES. BOUABID'S ASSERTIONS THAT PARTY'S CONDITIONS FOR ELECTIONS REMAINED UNCHANGED AND THAT CONGRESS NOT CALLED TO ENDORSE ELECTION CALL SEEM AIMED AT THESE ELEMENTS AND AT REFURBISHING PARTY'S CREDENTIALS WITH YOUNGER, MORE RADICAL INTELLECTUALS.

7. IN LAST ANALYSIS, HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT USFP, LIKE ISTIQ-LAL, WHICH LAST WEEK DECLARED ITSELF READY FOR ELECTIONS ON BASICALLY SAME TERMS AS THOSE SPELLED OUT BY BOUABID, WILL EXAMINE ANY PALACE ELECTION PROPOSAL CAREFULLY AND WILL THINK LONG AND HARD BEFORE REJECTING IT. USFP, LIKE OTHER PARTIES, IS VERY WEAK, AND BOUABID PROBABLY SEES POSITIVE APPROACH TOWARDS REGIME AS ONLY REALISTIC COURSE OF ACTION FOR PRESENT.
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